

Message Text

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14

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3989

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL PESHAWAR UNN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USUN NEW YORK 1515

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISLAMABAD 1223

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: REACTION TO ISRAELI COURT DECISION ON AL-AQSA

1. FEBRUARY 4 NEWSPAPERS CARRY STORIES AND EDITORIALS
HIGHLY CRITICAL OF REPORTED ISRAELI COURT DECISION TO
ALLOW JEWISH PRAYER SERVICES TO BE HELD IN AL-AQSA MOSQUE.

2. A COMMITTEE OF LEADING RELIGIOUS FIGURES, CHAIRED
BY MINISTER FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS NIAZI, "VEHEMENTLY
CONDEMNED THE FLAGRANT VIOLATION" OF THE MOSQUE AND
CALLED FOR A PROTEST DAY, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6. THE
COMMITTEE ALSO URGED ALL MUSLIM COUNTRIES TO TAKE A
UNITED STAND IN THIS MATTER.

3. EDITORIAL REACTION HAS BEEN RESTRICTED SO FAR TO
URDU PRESS. IN INTEMPERATE AND SCATHING TONE, EDI-
TORIALS NOTE THE "SHOCK AND INDIGNATION IN THE ENTIRE
MUSLIM WORLD," AND DESCRIBE THE COURT DECISION AS
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"HIGHLY PROVOCATIVE AND CRIMINAL." US IS ALSO CRITI-

CALED IN ONE EDITORIAL WHICH STATES ISRAEL NEVER
HESITATES TO TAKE ANTI-MUSLIM ACTIONS AS IT IS
CONFIDENT OF ITS STRENGTH BASED ON AMERICAN SUPPORT.
(WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE, HOWEVER, THAT SCHEDULED PROTEST
WILL INVOLVE US INSTALLATIONS OR INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS.)
GREATEST FLIGHT OF RHETORICAL FANCY IS ONE EDITORIAL
CLAIM THAT IF STEPS ARE NOT TAKE TO CHECK ISRAELI
AGGRESSION, GOI WILL FEEL TEMPTED AND ENCOURAGED TO
"EXTEND ITS FRONTIERS TO MEDINA."

4. PAKISTANIS HAVE PLAYED LEADING ROLE IN CONDEMNING
WHAT THEY SEE AS ISRAELI DESECRATIONS OF ISLAMIC HOLY
PLACES. THIS STEMS NOT ONLY FROM CLOSE POLITICAL TIES
WITH ARAB WORLD BUT ALSO STRONG IDENTIFICATION MOST
PAKISTANIS FEEL WITH ISLAMIC CAUSES, PARTICULARLY THOSE
INVOLVING RELIGIOUS SENSIBILITIES. IF PAST REACTIONS
AND PRESENT EDITORIAL COMMENT ARE ANY INDICATION, WE
WOULD EXPECT GOP TO CALL FOR MEETING OF ISLAMIC
SECRETARIAT, AND PERHAPS CALLING ATTENTION OF UN
DELEGATIONS TO ISSUE, AS WE RECALL IT DID AT TIME OF
AL-AQSA FIRE AND ISRAELI DECISION TO ALLOW JEWISH
SERVICES IN TOMB OF ABRAHAM.
BYROADE

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